11. (amended) A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein blood mononuclear cells and/or subsets thereof and/or HLA-G and/or HLA-G linked variants thereof and/or cells expressing all or part of the variants fully and/or partially matching a female and/or male and/or foetus are selected from a test panel.

12. (amended) A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein the HLA-G is partially or fully purified from a cell expressing HLA-G.

REMARKS

Claims 5-8 and 10-12 have been amended to remove multiple dependencies (non-substantive change). No new matter has been added by virtue of those amendments.

In the Office Action, a Restriction Requirement was imposed.

The Restriction Requirement is respectfully traversed.

Among other things, it is asserted in the Office Action that HLA-G was known and therefore does not serve as a technical feature linking the claims. The Lee et al. document is cited.

Applicants traverse that assertion. For instance, Applicants' disclosure includes that the combination of the paternal and maternal HLA-G (or a linked gene) alleles in the fetus and the HLA-G alleles in the mother play a role in determining whether the pregnancy is normal or abnormal.

The claims do not recite HLA-G per se.

Moreover, during the International Search and Examination, a unity objection was not raised. Enclosed herewith is a further copy of the International Preliminary Search Report. The International Search Report and cited documents have been submitted in an Information Disclosure Statement.

Additionally, significant time and expense will be imposed if ***seven*** separate divisional applications are required to prosecute each of the ***seven*** groups identified in the Office Action.

In view thereof, reconsideration of the Restriction is requested. It is requested that all pending claims be considered at this time.

In any event, to provide a complete response, Applicants elect Group I, as that Group is defined in the Office Action. In the Office Action, it is indicated that claims 1-15, 17 and 24 are included in that Group I. Applicants also submit that claim 23 which relates to a test kit should be included with the claims of Group I; the search and examination of claim 23 will be overlapping with the other claims of Group I.

Early consideration and allowance of the application are earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

Peter F. Corless (Reg. No. 38,360)
EDWARDS & ANGELL, LLP
Dike, Bronstein, Roberts & Cushman IP Group
P.O. Box 9169
Boston, MA 02209
Tel: (617) 439-4444
Fax: (617) 439-4170

VERSION SHOWING MARKED CHANGES

IN THE CLAIMS

5. (amended) A method as claimed in claim 1 [claim 1-4] wherein comparing of one or more variants is performed by association and/or linkage analysis and/or transmission analysis.

6. (amended) A method as claimed in claim 1 [any preceding claim] wherein all or part of the HLA-G sequence is cloned into a vector.

7. (amended) A method as claimed in claim 1 [any preceding claim] wherein all or part of the nucleic acid sequence is identified by a method or combination of methods selected from DNA sequencing, glycosylase mediated polymorphism detection, restriction fragment length polymorphism analysis, enzymatic or chemical cleavage analysis, hybridization to DNA and/or RNA probes and/or DNA probes arrays and/or allele specific DNA and/or RNA probes, allele specific amplification analysis, eletrophoretic mobility analysis and 5' nuclease assay analysis.

8. (amended) A method as claimed in claim 1 [any preceding claim] wherein all or part of HLA-G and/or all or part of one or more variants thereof is expressed as a polypeptide *in vitro* and/or in a prokaryotic and/or eukaroytic cell.

10. (amended) A method as claimed in claim 1 [any preceding claim] wherein the activity of HLA-G and/or any combination of variants thereof and/or blood mononuclear cells and/or a subset of such cells, selected from T cells and/or natural killer cells, is measured by one or more of the following procedures.

(a) measuring the interaction of HLA-G and/or variants thereof with blood mononuclear cells and/or subsets thereof by assessing one or more of the following with respect to HLA-G expressing cells and/or blood mononuclear cells; cell proliferation, transformation, cytotoxic response, surface marker expression, cytokine production, conjugate formation and target specificity,

(b) measuring the size and/or level of all or part of HLA-G mRNA and/or its encoded polypeptide,

(c) measuring the peptide binding capability of all or part opf HLA-G and/or variants thereof,

(d) measuring the binding capability of all or part of the HLA-G and/or variants thereof to a HLA-G receptor,

(e) measuring one nor more molecules whose level is altered as a result of the interaction of the HLA-G and/or variants thereof and/or cells expressing HLA-G with blood mononuclear cells,

(f) measuring the expression levels of one or more genes and/or proteins in the HLA-G expressing cells.

11. (amended) A method as claimed in claim 1 [any preceding claim] wherein blood mononuclear cells and/or subsets thereof and/or HLA-G and/or HLA-G linked variants thereof and/or cells expressing all or part of the variants fully and/or partially matching a female and/or male and/or foetus are selected from a test panel.

12. (amended) A method as claimed in claim 1 [any preceding claim] wherein the HLA-G is partially or fully purified from a cell expressing HLA-G.